

## **The Provenance of the *Creation and Expulsion* Window of Valentin Bousch**

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The *Creation and Expulsion* (1533) was one of seven windows created by the Alsatian stained-glass artist Valentin Bousch (1490–1541) for the choir of Saint-Firmin in Flavigny-sur-Moselle (Meurthe-et-Moselle) in northeastern France. These windows were created between 1531 and 1533. Little of the early history of this Benedictine priory church, founded in the tenth century, is known. By the fifteenth century the community was apparently in decline. Wary de Lucy, the lay prior from 1510–1557, rebuilt the church between 1525 and 1530, preserving the twelfth-century tower, and commissioning the stained glass for the choir. The priory was secularized during the French revolution but rededicated after the Restoration of 1814 by a community of Benedictine nuns. By 1850 three of the windows had been removed. A description of the choir published in 1877 confirms that the *Creation and Expulsion*, the *Deluge*, *Moses and the Tablets of Law*, and the *Crucifixion* windows were still *in situ*. In 1904, responding to a new law separating church and state, the nuns emigrated to Italy, selling the church furnishings, including the four remaining stained-glass windows, before they left. Photographs of the *Creation and Expulsion*, the *Deluge*, and *Moses and the Tablets of Law* were published in 1907 in a French journal. In or after 1904 but before 1913 the windows came into the possession of the Paris art dealer Jacques Seligmann & Cie. and were subsequently shipped to their branch in New York (which had opened in 1904 and moved to new premises in 1914). The *Crucifixion* window was sold to the New York magnate Thomas Fortune Ryan in 1913, while the other two were sold to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1917. Although yet to be fully documented, it is likely that William Randolph Hearst acquired the *Creation and Expulsion* window directly from Jacques Seligmann (1858–1923), with whom Hearst had extensive dealings. The window was installed in Hearst's vast New York apartment in the Clarendon at 137 Riverside Drive, probably by 1923 but before 1929, and remained there until Hearst vacated the premises in 1937 or 1938. No further record of the *Creation and Expulsion* window is known until 1952 when it was sold to Fritz Zeigler (1902–1996) of Fort Langley, near Vancouver, British Columbia, by William Randolph Hearst, Jr., a year after his father's death. The window was installed in the Zeigler

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house and remained there until 2006. It was consigned to a local auction house in 2007 and was acquired by Sam Fogg of London, from whom the Hill Art Foundation acquired it in 2018.